THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART
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Also Bulletin Galleys sent on Rembrandt's CHRIST TAKEN BEFORE CAIAPHAS and Page from a RAZM NAMA (January Bulletin)

FOR RELEASE
Paul Mooney: December 31, 1960
Paul Metzler and Marie Kirkwood: Jan.1 1961

A FUNERARY URN TOP depicting the Gate of Hell has just been purchased by The Cleveland Museum of Art. It originated in the Chinese Wei Period of Six Dynasties (386-550) and is made of Yueh-ware - a fine grained porcelaneous material over which a semi-transparent glaze is applied.

Stamped on all four sides, of the upper tier of the tower, is a dragon, symbol of water. The phoenix on the second tier symbolizes the norther location of Hell in relation to the living earth.

The Monkey, according to legend, once visited Hell and created a furious uproar by tearing out the pages of the registration book that bore his name and the names of his clan so that none of them could ever be called to Hell. The Monkeys on this urn, perched on gateway tops, jeer at the newcomers forced to enter, while they remain eternally free.

Along the base of the tower are shown groups of musicians producing enough noise to break open the cavern of Hell. The dog probably represents the fee the damned soul would pay to enter the Gate.

The urn, which has an evenly glazed olive color, is an example of Yueh ware in its early stage of development and is 7-3/4 inches in height. It was at one time fitted to a tall vase made for burying along with the dead. It is still well preserved after years underground. The Gate of Hell is a unique subject rarely depicted in pottery or sculpture, and comes to Cleveland as a Bequest of Leonard C. Hanna, Jr.

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